

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00264 221044Z

53

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAB-01 ACDA-19

OMB-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 SAJ-01 NIC-01 DRC-01

/161 W

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R 220940Z MAR 74

FM USINT DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 222

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION GENEVA

USUN NEW YORK 016

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0264

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

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PAGE 02 DAMASC 00264 221044Z

KUWAIT PASS MUSCAT

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, SU

SUBJECT: SUDANESE-SYRIAN COMMUNIQUE MARKS END OF
NUMEIRY'S OFFICIAL VISIT

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT NUMEIRY OF THE SUDAN RECEIVED BANNER
HEADLINE ATTENTION DURING HIS THREE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT
TO DAMASCUS (MARCH 18-20). COVERAGE INCLUDED DETAILS
OF HIS VISITS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICES, FACTORIES, AND THE
FRONT LINES ON THE GOLAN. MANY WERE DOCUMENTED WITH PHOTO
COVERAGE. REACTION LOCALLY IS THAT NUMEIRY MADE TRIP TO
MEDIATE BETWEEN SADAT AND ASAD AND THUS REINFORCE HIS OWN
POSITION AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES.

2. IN THE COMMUNIQUE, ISSUED AT THE CLOSE OF HIS VISIT
(MARCH 20) NUMEIRY CONGRATULATED SYRIA FOR ITS VICTORY
DURING THE COTOBER WAR AND STRESSED THE "DEEP TIES
BETWEEN THE TWO BROTHERING PEOPLE." THE COMMUNIQUE
DESCRIBED NUMEIRY'S VISIT TO THE FRONT LINE AND HIS
PRAISE FOR THE SYRIAN ARMY'S HEROIC SPIRIT. DURING THE
TALKS THE SUDANESE EXPLAINED RECENT POLITICAL, ECONOMIC
AND LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SUDAN AS WELL AS
THE REASONS BEHIND THE SUDAN'S CURRENT INTERNATIONAL
STANCE. THE SYRIAN SIDE DESCRIBED DEVELOPMENTS STEMMING
FROM THE OCTOBER WAR AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN
SYRIA. THE COMMUNIQUE EMPHASIZED THAT SYRIAN "ACTIVITIES
ON THE FOREIGN FIELD...ARE INSPIRED FROM THE HIGH
INTERESTS OF THE ARAB NATION." BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT
THERE WAS A NECESSITY FOR COOPERATION "BETWEEN THE TWO
FRATERNAL COUNTRIES IN ALL POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND
CULTURAL FIELDS." TO EFFECT THIS, THERE IS TO BE CLOSER
COOPERATION BETWEEN THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS IN EACH
COUNTRY (NOT FURTHER CLARIFIED), AN AGREEMENT FOR
COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATION (SIGNED) AND
A VISIT BY THE SUDANESE MINISTER OF ECONOMY WITHIN ONE
MONTH TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR CLOSER ECONOMIC COOPERATION
AND TO SIGN A CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT. NUMEIRY
ALSO EXTENDED AN INVITATION (WHICH WAS ACCEPTED) FOR
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PAGE 03 DAMASC 00264 221044Z

PRESIDENT ASAD TO VISIT THE SUDAN.

3. THE COMMUNIQUE ITSELF SEEMS TO US TO BREAK NO NEW OR
IMPORTANT GROUND. WE DID LEARN FROM ONE GOVERNMENT
SOURCE, HOWEVER, THAT SOME SYRIANS WERE QUITE UPSET
WITH THE SUDANESE DESIRE TO DELETE "ARAB" FROM THE
NORMALLY USED PHRASE "BETWEEN TWO FRATERNAL ARAB
COUNTRIES." OUR SOURCE NOTED THIS OBVIOUSLY

STEMMED FROM THE SUDANESE SENSITIVITY TO THEIR SOUTHERN POPULATION, BUT THIS SENSITIVITY SEEMED NOT TO BE UNDERSTOOD BY SOME "LESS SOPHISTICATED" SYRIANS PARTICIPATING IN THE TALKS.

4. MEANWHILE, THERE ARE SEVERAL RUMORS (NONE SUBSTANTIATED AT THIS END) THAT THERE WERE OTHER REASONS FOR NUMEIRY'S VISIT. A PREVALENT RUMOR AMONG THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS IS THAT NUMEIRY CAME TO MEDIATE BETWEEN THE EGYPTIANS AND THE SYRIANS BECAUSE THE LATTER CONTINUE TO BE DISPLEASED BY UNILATERAL EGYPTIAN DECISIONS SINCE THE OCTOBER WAR. A SECOND ONE ALLEGES THAT NUMEIRY CAME TO OFFER SUDANESE TROOPS TO THE SYRIANS IN THE EVENT OF A RESUMPTION OF HOSTILITIES. A THIRD IS THAT NUMEIRY IS ANTI-COMMUNIST AND, AS A RESULT OF HIS CLOSE CALL IN KHARTOUM, WANTED TO WARN PRESIDENT ASAD TO BE CAREFUL WITH THE SOVIETS. AND FINALLY, SOME WERE SAYING THAT NUMEIRY WANTED TO REASSURE ASAD AS HE BEGINS WORKING WITH AMERICANS THAT WE CAN AND SHOULD BE TRUSTED.

5. A RELIABLE FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE PASSED ALONG SOME OBSERVATIONS TO THE EFFECT THAT NUMEIRY CAME TO DAMASCUS TO PRESERVE HIS ARAB IMAGE--TO POLISH UP HIS POSITION IN SUPPORT OF THE ARAB CAUSE. OUR SOURCE NOTED THAT WITH NUMEIRY'S PRESENT CLOSE TIES WITH THE MORE MODERATE REGIMES IN THE AREA (EGYPT), HE WANTED ALSO TO LET THE OTHERS (SYRIA) KNOW THAT HE IS NOT ABANDONING THEIR CAUSE. THE SOURCE DESCRIBED THE SUDANESE IN SEVERAL WAYS: OPEN-MINDED IN THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO SEE ALL THE FINE ANGLES (A RESULT WE WERE TOLD OF THEIR SOUTHERN PROBLEMS), MODERATE, AND IN SOME WAYS MORE ARAB THAN THE ARABS.

6. ANY FURTHER INFORMATION OR COMMENTS FROM EMBASSY
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PAGE 04 DAMASC 00264 221044Z

KHARTOUM WOULD BE APPRECIATED.
SCOTES

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